

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-11

OMB-01 ACDA-10 SAM-01 SCCT-01 /093 W

----- 060686

R 121310Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1148

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDON DERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 013

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: AIR OF EXPECTATION ON DAY OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

REF: BELFAST 10

1. ULSTER ATTENTION FOCUSED ON LONDON WHERE PRIME MINISTER WILSON WILL MAKE STATEMENT ON NORTHERN IRELAND AND SECRETARY OF STATE MERLYN REES WILL INITIATE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION REPORT TODAY. PRIME MINISTER EXPECTED TO CONCENTRATE ON SECURITY MEASURES AND IT GUESSED SECSTATE WILL RECOMMEND RECALL OF CONVENTION TO EXPLORE FURTHER ALTERNATIVES TO MAJORITY RULE AS RECOMMEND BY LOYALIST CONVENTION REPORT.

2. UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION (UUUC) LEADERS AND ORGANIZERS MET JAN . 9 AND 10 AT HOTEL OUTSIDE ENNISKILLEN. SOME PARAMILITARY LEADERS ATTENDED FIRST SESSION FRIDAY AFTERNOON AS MEMBERS ULSTER WORKERS COUNCIL (UWC) WERE ASKED TO LEAVE BY REVEREND IAN PAISLEY AND DID SO. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS AT CONFERENCE APPEAR TO BE: (A) RESOLVE TO COUNTER A REJECTION OF "WILL OF MAJORITY AS EXPRESSED THROUGH BALLOT BOX" BY WESTMINSTER WITH PEACEFUL PROTESTS, (B) DETERMINATION THAT SINGLE LOYALIST PARTY NOT FEASIBLE AND CONSEQUENT DECISION TO RETAIN COALITION

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FRAMEWORK PERHAPS EXPENDED TO INCLUDE SUCH GROUPS AS UWC, (C)

DECISION TO HOLD SERIES RALLIES THROUGHOUT PROVINCE, BEGINNING NEXT MONTH AND CULMINATING IN MASS RALLY BELFAST. IT UNLIKELY THAT UWC NOW INTENDS MOUNT STRIKE ON MODEL MAY 1974. ONE IMPORTANT DETERRENT IS LACK PARAMILITARY SUPPORT, PARTICULARLY FROM ULSTER DEFENSE ASSOCIATION (UDA) FOR UUUC WITHOUT WILLIAM CRAIG AND GLENN BARR, NEITHER OF WHOM ATTENDED CONFERENCE. UUUC COULD DISRUPT LOCAL COUNCILS BY BOYCOTTS. IRONICALLY, THIS MOST MEANINGFUL IN AREAS WHERE COUNCILORS DISCUSSING CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN REPUBLIC OR IRELAND. THIS KIND OF COOPERATION COULD QUALIFY FOR EEC SUBSIDIES. UUUC MEMBERS AND THEIR WIVES ATTENDING CONFERENCE AWAKENED EARLY JAN. 10 BY GUNFIRE AS ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY FIRED SOME 50 ROUNDS AT WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE FOUR GUNMEN APPROACHING CONFERENCE HOTEL. DAYLIGHT SEARCH FRUITLESS.

2. MINISCULE NORTHERN IRELAND LABOUR PARTY (NILP) WHOSE LEADERS SPENT PART LAST WEEK LOBBYING IN LONDON HAS REPORTED BELIEF THAT HMG WILL ANNOUNCE RENUNCIATION OF IMPOSED POWER-SHARING AS ALTERNATIVE. THIS SEEMS TO CONGEN A DECISION THAT LABOUR GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE ONLY AFTER CONSULTATION WITH OTHER PARTIES AND NILP ONLY SOURCE FOR STORY.

3. IN SECTARIAN ATTACKS, ONE CATHOLIC MALE SHOT AND KILLED BELFAST NIGHT JAN. 10 AND ONE PROTESTANT MALE BELFAST ESCAPED INJURY IN DOORSTEP SHOOTING BELFAST JAN. 11. THERE THREE BOMB ATTACKS ON INDIVIDUAL HOUSES BELFAST. ARMY DEFUSED 500 LB. BOMB IN HIJACKED CAR OUTSIDE TELEPHONE EXCHANGE GLARRYFORD COUNTY ANTRIM JAN. 11. ONLY LATTER APPEARS BE HANDIWORK PROVISIONAL IRA. MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND PEOPLE MET IN PEACE RALLY ORGANIZED BY LEADERS CHURCH OF IRELAND, METHODEST, ROMAN CATHOLIC AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES ARMAGH CITY JAN.10.SPICER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BELFAS00013
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760010-0917
From: BELFAST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760167/aaaachra.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BELFAST 10
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUL 2004 by castelsl>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AIR OF EXPECTATION ON DAY OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE
TAGS: PINT, UK, EI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006